

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of administering distribution of electronic digital copies of a literary work, the method comprising:

receiving from a user a digital signature having properties that correspond to one or more attributes of a physical object bearing a recording of the literary work;

revealing the one or more attributes of the physical object from the digital signature;

determining, based on the one or more attributes of the physical object, whether the user has physical possession of the physical object; and

selectively making accessible to the user electronic digital services concerning the literary work based on the determination of whether the user has physical possession of the physical object.

2. The method of administering distribution of electronic digital copies of a literary work of claim 1, wherein the electronic digital services comprise distributing an electronic digital copy.

3. The method of administering distribution of electronic digital copies of a literary work of claim 1, wherein the electronic digital services comprises providing streaming audio.

4. The method of administering distribution of electronic digital copies of a literary work of claim 1, wherein the one or more attributes of the physical object are revealed by performing a cryptographic transformation on the digital signature.

5. The method of administering distribution of electronic digital copies of a literary work of claim 1, wherein the one or more attributes of the physical object comprise errors.

6. The method of administering distribution of electronic digital copies of a literary work of claim 1, wherein the physical object is a CD and the one or more attributes of the physical object comprise the number of tracks on the CD and the length of each track.

7. The method of administering distribution of electronic digital copies of a literary work of claim 1, wherein the physical object is a CD and the one or more attributes of the physical object comprise extended track data.

8. The method of administering distribution of electronic digital copies of a literary work of claim 1, wherein the one or more attributes of the physical object comprise a serial number.

9. A computer system adapted to administer distribution of electronic digital copies of a literary work, the computer system comprising:

a processor; and

a memory electronically connected to the processor, the memory including software instructions adapted to enable the computer system to perform operations comprising:

receiving from a user a digital signature having properties that correspond to one or more attributes of a physical object bearing a recording of the literary work;

revealing the one or more attributes of the physical object from the digital signature;
determining, based on the one or more attributes of the physical object, whether the user has physical possession of the physical object; and selectively making accessible to the user electronic digital services concerning the literary work based on the determination of whether the user has physical possession of the physical object.

10. The computer system of claim 9, wherein the electronic digital services comprise distributing an electronic digital copy.

11. The computer system of claim 9, wherein the electronic digital services comprises providing streaming audio.

12. The computer system of claim 9, wherein the one or more attributes of the physical object are revealed by performing a cryptographic transformation on the digital signature.

13. The computer system of claim 9, wherein the one or more attributes of the physical object comprise errors.

14. The computer system of claim 9, wherein the physical object is a CD and the one or more attributes of the physical object comprise the number of tracks on the CD and the length of each track.

15. The computer system of claim 9, wherein the physical object is a CD and the one or more attributes of the physical object comprise extended track data.

16. The computer system of claim 9, wherein the one or more attributes of the physical object comprise a serial number.

17. A method for granting electronic rights based on an electronic signature, the method comprising:

receiving an electronic signature transmitted via a network by a putative owner of a recording item;

analyze the electronic signature to determine the title of the recording item;

analyze the electronic signature to determine whether the recording item is unique to the putative owner; and

in the event the recording item is determined to be unique to the putative owner, granting rights to the putative owner as being true owner of the recording item, wherein the true owner is permitted access to digital electronic copies of works recorded on the recording item.

18. The method for granting electronic rights of claim 17, the method further comprising:

downloading to the true owner a digital electronic copy of works recorded on the recording item.

19. The method for granting electronic rights of claim 18, wherein the digital electronic copy is in MP3 format.

20. The method for granting electronic rights of claim 18, wherein the digital electronic copy is in WMA format.

21. The method for granting electronic rights of claim 18, wherein the digital electronic copy is in RealAudio format.

22. The method for granting electronic rights of claim 17, the method further comprising:

adding a copy of the works recorded on the recording item to a central data storage for downloading to true owners of legitimate copies of the recording item.

23. The method for granting electronic rights of claim 17, wherein the electronic signature is an electronic hash of information selectively extracted from the recording item.

24. The method for granting electronic rights of claim 17, wherein determining whether the recording item is unique to the putative owner is done based on attributes of the recording item.

25. The method for granting electronic rights of claim 24, wherein the attributes of the recording item on which the determination of uniqueness are based comprise errors.

26. A computer system adapted to grant electronic rights based on an electronic signature received over a network, the computer system comprising:

a processor; and

a memory electronically connected to the processor, the memory including software instructions adapted to enable the computer system to perform operations comprising:

receiving an electronic signature transmitted via the network by a putative owner of a recording item;

analyze the electronic signature to determine the title of the recording item;

analyze the electronic signature to determine whether the recording item is unique to the putative owner; and

in the event the recording item is determined to be unique to the putative owner, granting rights to the putative owner as being true owner of the recording item, wherein the true owner is permitted access to digital electronic copies of works recorded on the recording item.

27. The computer system of claim 26, wherein the software instructions included in the memory further enable the computer system to perform operations comprising:

downloading to the true owner a digital electronic copy of works recorded on the recording item.

28. The computer system of claim 27, wherein the digital electronic copy is in MP3 format.

29. The computer system of claim 27, wherein the digital electronic copy is in WMA format.

30. The computer system of claim 27, wherein the digital electronic copy is in RealAudio format.

31. The computer system of claim 26, wherein the software instructions included in the memory further enable the computer system to perform operations comprising:

adding a copy of the works recorded on the recording item to a central data storage for downloading to true owners of legitimate copies of the recording item.

32. The computer system of claim 26, wherein the electronic signature is an electronic hash of information selectively extracted from the recording item.

33. The computer system of claim 26, wherein determining whether the recording item is unique to the putative owner is done based on attributes of the recording item.

34. The computer system of claim 33, wherein the attributes of the recording item on which the determination of uniqueness are based comprise errors.

35. A system for granting electronic rights concerning a physical media bearing entertainment content, the system comprising:

a media signature detection module for reading and detecting a media signature on the physical media; and

a media signature judgment module for determining a specific title corresponding to entertainment borne on the physical media;

wherein electronic rights are granted to a person who owns the physical media, based on the determining a specific title corresponding to entertainment borne on the physical media.

36. The system of claim 35, wherein the media signature detection module is present on a user computer and the media signature judgment module is present on a service provider computer.

37. The system of claim 35, wherein the media signature detection module comprises a software application implemented on a computer.

38. The system of claim 35, wherein the media signature judgment module comprise a software application implemented on a computer.

39. The system of claim 35, wherein the media signature judgment module includes a comparator connected to make a comparison of a user provided signature to a signature from a media storage database.